

Accountability Report

2016–2017

Department of Justice
July 2017

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Accountability Statement:

The Accountability Report of the Department of Justice for the year ended March 31, 2017 is prepared pursuant to the Finance Act and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Department of Justice Business Plan for the fiscal year just ended. The reporting of the Department of Justice outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by Department of Justice management.

We acknowledge that this Accountability Report is the responsibility of Department of Justice management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Department of Justice 2016/17 Business Plan.

Original signed by

Original signed by

Mark Furey
Minister

Karen Hudson
Deputy Minister

Message from the Minister and Deputy Minister:

On behalf of the Department of Justice, it is our pleasure to present the Accountability Report for the 2016/17 fiscal year. The Department of Justice is responsible for the administration of justice and for promoting the safety and security of Nova Scotians through justice-related programs, service, and initiatives.

In 2016/17, the Department addressed the review recommendations of the Maintenance Enforcement Program to improve client services for families. All 19 of the short-term objectives have been either completed or substantially completed and in the Fall of 2016, amendments were passed to the *Maintenance Enforcement Act* to increase enforcement tools available to MEP staff.

In improving the Province's response to cyberbullying, the Department was able to successfully coordinate with key stakeholders to implement 16 of the 17 recommendations from the Independent Review of the Police and Prosecution Response to the Rehtaeh Parsons Case. The final recommendation is awaiting new legislation.

The Department remains committed to providing a safe and secure work environment for staff that work within the Justice system and in 2016/17 it implemented recommendations from the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) review of Sherriff's Services. To date, 25 of 51 Sheriff Services OHS recommendations have been completed with an additional 18 substantially completed. This included courthouse facility upgrades, issuing Conducted Electrical Weapons in the highest risk courthouses, and staff training.

Nova Scotia's Restorative Justice Program gives victims, community members, and offenders more meaningful involvement in the justice system after an offence has been committed. Restorative justice holds offenders accountable, repairs the harm caused by the offence, reintegrates the offender, and achieves a sense of healing for the victim and the community. The Department remains committed to the success of the Restorative Justice Program. In 2016/17, after a successful five-year pilot project in Cape Breton Regional Municipality and Colchester County/East Hants, Nova Scotia expanded the restorative justice program as an option for adult offences across the province.

Through this report, a summary of the progress the department has made in three priority areas is outlined. Those three areas are:

- Improve Community Safety and Wellbeing;
- Improve Access to Justice; and
- Provide cost-effective, consistent and effective services

We are pleased to report that progress has been made in all three of these areas, all of which was done within budget. In the past year, the Department of Justice has:

- Collaborated with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and Department of Community Services to provide employment support, programs for youth on community supervision orders, and a teacher position at the Halifax Youth Attendance Centre for moderate to high risk youth under court ordered community supervision.
- Implemented in collaboration with the Community Justice Society, culturally appropriate programming for members of the Aboriginal and African Nova Scotian communities in custody, including: Rites of Passage, Red Road Sharing Circle, L'nu-way, and Building Bridges.
- Worked in partnership with Nova Scotia Community College, which allowed Department of Justice teachers to teach Nova Scotia Community College courses to offenders while in custody.
- Collaborated with the Department of Health and Wellness, the Nova Scotia Health Authority, and the IWK to assist in clinical intervention for adults and youth in custody and community by providing an addictions social worker and an additional social worker in the New Glasgow area.
- Worked closely with Department of Health and Wellness on a provincial Opioid Response Action Plan.
- Worked in partnership with community programs to provide employment based services to assist individuals transitioning from custody into the community.
- Provided training to all correctional staff on trauma informed care practices.
- Implemented 16 of the 17 recommendations from the Independent Review of the Police and Prosecution Response to the Rehtaeh Parsons Case, with the final recommendation awaiting new legislation.
- Expanded the Restorative Justice program for adults across Nova Scotia.
- Worked with senior leaders of the province's criminal justice system including: the Chief Judge of the Provincial and Family Courts, the federal and provincial Public Prosecution Services, the police, Nova Scotia Legal Aid, the Barrister's Society, and the Criminal Lawyers Association to focus efforts on reducing court delays through initiatives such as: the Early Resolution/Initial Sentencing Position Project, introduction of a Real-Time Case Age Ticker, the use of video conferencing to reduce time spent in court, and the multi-disciplinary Complex Case Analysis working group.
- Provided increased services through the Family Law Website (www.nsfamilylaw.ca) including workbooks and guides, online portals, mobile access, and instructional videos.
- Provided the Parent Information Program.
- Completed 15 of 19 short term review recommendations for the Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP), with the remaining four being substantially completed.
- Passed amendments to the *Maintenance Enforcement Act* in the Fall of 2016 to increase enforcement tools available to MEP staff.
- Committed to funding upgrades for high use cell blocks at Sydney, Dartmouth, and Halifax Provincial Courts.

- Implemented 25 of 51 Sheriff Services Occupational Health and Safety recommendations with an additional 18 substantially completed including facility upgrades and Conducted Energy Weapons training for key positions.
- Increased training funding for staff to undertake enhanced skills training including critical incident de-escalation techniques.
- Completed a staffing review to address effective and efficient deployment of staff to address OHS issues.
- Developed a database to conduct estate searches through online remote access to the Department's estate management system (EMA) for inquiry purposes.
- In response to the recommendations from the Mercer Review, terms of reference for ongoing audits of police functions were created in conjunction with Nova Scotia Chiefs of Police. The first round of audits, focusing on major crime investigations, will be completed in August 2017.

We want to recognize the hard work and contribution of our department's almost 1,600 staff members. Their dedication and professionalism is essential to the delivery of our efficient and impartial justice system. We present this Accountability Report with sincere thanks to our employees and partners across the province, and to you, the reader, for the interest you show in our accomplishments.

Thank You

Original signed by

Original signed by

Mark Furey
Minister

Karen Hudson
Deputy Minister

Financial Results:

Justice			
	2016/17 Estimate	2016/17 Actual	2016/17 Variance
Program & Service Area	(\$ thousands)		
Departmental Expenses:			
Administration	20,658	21,049	391
Nova Scotia Legal Aid	24,340	24,625	285
Court Services	70,332	70,147	(185)
Correctional Services	69,617	69,489	(128)
Public Trustee	2,390	2,210	(180)
Nova Scotia Medical Examiner Services	4,057	4,427	370
Public Safety	138,381	137,027	(1,354)
Serious Incident Response Team	613	585	(28)
Total Department Expenses	330,388	329,559	(829)
Additional Information:			
Ordinary Revenue	(1,583)	(1,451)	132
Fees and Other Charges	(22,693)	(21,870)	823
Ordinary Recoveries	(115,643)	(116,167)	(524)
TCA Purchase Requirements	5,492	1,785	(3,707)
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	1,597	1,561	(36)

Measuring Our Performance:

OUTCOME: Improve community safety and wellbeing

Goal: Work with others to promote public safety and wellbeing through innovative initiatives

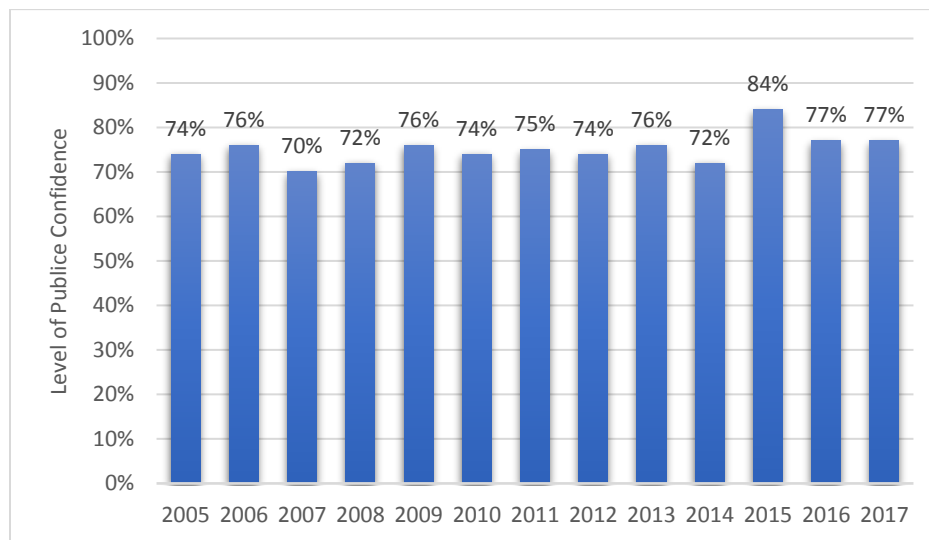
Collaboration between departments and other partners is a key component to improving community safety and wellbeing. The Department of Justice has worked with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Department of Community Services, Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC), the IWK, as well as community based organizations on innovative initiatives. These include initiatives such as cultural based programming for adult and youth offenders, community-based programs such as CeaseFire, and programs and services for women in custody.

Performance measures used to assess improving community safety and wellbeing include confidence in the justice system, the number of core programs offered in custody and community, the number of participants in the CeaseFire Violence Interruption Model, and the number of outreach education sessions provided by the CyberSCAN team.

Performance Measure: Percentage of Nova Scotians who have some or a great deal of confidence in the justice system

The Department of Justice surveys Nova Scotians annually to gauge public confidence in the justice system through the Atlantic Quarterly survey. The department has established a target of maintaining or increasing public confidence relative to the base year of 2005.

Chart 1: Level of Public Confidence in Justice System.



Source: Atlantic Quarterly Survey
Sample size margin of error is 4.9%

In 2017, 77% of Nova Scotians had some or a great deal of confidence in the justice system, which is the same as the previous year. Overall, public confidence in Nova Scotia's justice system has remained relatively stable since the 2005 base year, with about three out of four Nova Scotians indicating that they have some or a great deal of confidence in the justice system. The exception was a significant increase which occurred in 2015, followed by a return to more typical levels the following year.

The department continues its efforts to ensure Nova Scotians retain confidence in the justice system. This includes collaborative and innovative approaches that focus on increased access to justice, improved case processing, and enhanced rehabilitative programming. The department continues to work with justice stakeholders to reduce delays through innovative business practices and increased use of technology, including making use of online platforms such as the Family Law website. The department has taken great strides in providing culturally accessible programming to promote better outcomes for Aboriginal and African Nova Scotians in custody, including L'nu-way, Red Road Sharing Circle, Rites of Passage, and Building Bridges.

Performance Measure: Number of core programs offered in custody and community corrections by site

This measure reflects the number of times core programming was offered to adult and youth offenders in custody and community by the Department of Justice. Through collaborative partnerships, the Department of Justice continues to expand core program offerings.

In 2016/17, the number of times programs were offered, increased for both youth and adult offenders. This was due to more engagement and participation of offenders in the core programming provided to them. Over the past four years, the number of times core programs were offered to adults in custody and community corrections nearly doubled, increasing from 21 in 2013/14 to 39 in 2016/17. During that same period, the number of times programs were offered for youth increased from 12 to 16.

Year	Number of times core programs offered	
	Adults	Youth
2013/14	21	12
2014/15	29	16
2015/16	35	14
2016/17	39	16

Among the programs offered, the Department of Justice, in collaboration with the Community Justice Society, continues to promote rehabilitative programs designed for Aboriginal people and African Nova Scotians. These include, L’nu-way, Red Road Sharing Circle, Rites of Passage, and Building Bridges.

L’nu-way was designed to help staff develop a greater understanding about Aboriginal and Mi’kmaq culture and to better appreciate the history and societal issues facing indigenous people. It was developed and led by a mostly Aboriginal team at correctional services and every course features at least one Aboriginal facilitator. This allows facilitators to share their first-hand experiences and stories as Aboriginal Canadians with attendees—helping to connect what is learned in the course with real-world situations.

Red Road Sharing Circle is an Aboriginal cultural program focusing on the seven sacred teachings and traditional practices including smudging, medicine pouches, bead work and drumming. Elders attend sessions and information about community resources specific to Aboriginal populations is provided.

Rites of Passage is an Africentric leadership program that aims to empower youth of African descent to reaffirm their cultural values and struggles through self-awareness, self-esteem, community building and enriching black consciousness and leadership. One to one interactions

and group sessions focus on discussion of fatherhood, returning home, anxiety, and pro-social lifestyles.

Building Bridges is an Africentric program aimed at empowering African Nova Scotian men and promoting program readiness. Building Bridges employs a curriculum that challenges participant's values and beliefs and encourages them to engage in programs that will assist them to make long term behaviour changes. It helps them to become more open to taking programs that will help them while in custody and upon release to community.

The Department of Justice continues to promote collaborative projects and programs to improve outcomes for Nova Scotians in custody, to assist with the successful, reintegration into the community. The Department has collaborated with the Department of Health and Wellness and the IWK to provide health services in custody settings, an addictions social worker at the Central Nova Scotia Correctional Facility, and clinical intervention for youth in custody and community. Justice works with the Department of Community Services in employment support programs at the Halifax Youth Attendance Centre. The Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC), through a letter of agreement, allows correctional facilities to offer NSCC courses to offenders while in custody, and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development provides funding for a teacher position at the Halifax Youth Attendance Centre for moderate to high risk youth under court ordered community supervision. Educational programming for youth in custody is supported by services such as access to curriculum up-dates, teacher professional development, completion of provincial assessments and access to educational resources and curriculum support.

The Department of Justice provides funding to community organizations such as the Elizabeth Fry Society and Coverdale Courtwork Society. These programs provide supports for women in custody and community.

The Department of Justice recognizes that the criminal justice system should be responsive to the needs of Nova Scotians and consider recommendations for improvement. Murray Segal was asked to review the response of the police and Public Prosecution Services to Rehtaeh Parsons Case. In October 2015, the report provided to the Minister outlined 17 recommendations for improvements to the criminal justice system. The Department accepted all the recommendations and has worked with its criminal justice partners to implement the recommendations. Sixteen of the 17 recommendations have been implemented. The final recommendation is regarding a Cyberscan/Police Protocol that will guide responses by police and the Cyberscan unit in dealing with cyberbullying complaints that may or may not be criminal in nature to ensure the complaint is addressed in the best manner possible. New cyber protection legislation must first be in place before proceeding on the final recommendation. Combined, these recommendations strengthen the province's response to the issue of cyberbullying.

Performance Measure: Number of participants in CeaseFire Violence Interruption Model

CeaseFire is a non-profit organization based in the Halifax Regional Municipality which focuses on eliminating violent behavior among youth in urban African Nova Scotian Communities. The Department has exceeded its goal of 30 participants each year since 2014/15, with 35 participants taking part in the program in 2016/17.

Performance Measure: Number of outreach education sessions provided by the CyberSCAN team

The CyberSCAN team provides education and information about cyberbullying, the impacts it has and the means and strategies by which individuals can deal with it. The team provides a strong focus on education and public awareness. The following table represents the number of educational sessions that have been provided to the public, with a target of 100 educational session per year.

Year	# of Educational Sessions
2014	358
2015	347
2016	147

Between 2014 and 2016, the target of 100 educational sessions per year was met. The largest numbers of presentation came in the early years of the program, yet remained on target into 2016.

OUTCOME: Improve access to Justice

Goal: Facilitating informed decision-making by providing accurate and timely information and support

Goal: Enabling timeliness of service

To support the goal of facilitating informed decision making and building on the success of the Family Law website, the platform now hosts several new resources for Nova Scotians. These include:

- *A Guide to Filing for Divorce in Nova Scotia.*
- Content for the NS *Families Change* portal is now available in English and French.
- A new *Appeals* section.
- A new *Family Homes on Reserve & Emergency Protection Orders* section.
- Family Justice Videos on affidavits, financial statements, and divorce.
- Upgrades to increase the security of the website and to improve mobile access.

In 2016/17, 355,304 individual users accessed the website. This is similar to the year before. These users, however, accessed 852,009 pages during their visits, an increase of 10% from the previous year.

The Department of Justice also began offering the Parent Information Program by videoconference for those unable to attend in person. 1,560 people completed the program in 2016/17, an increase of approximately 45% from the year before. In addition, a version of the Parent Information Program for Aboriginal populations in Nova Scotia is under development and is being reviewed by a working group of subject matter experts.

Reducing delays and improving criminal court case processing times is an important component of enabling timeliness of service. The Department of Justice recognizes that improving case processing times requires the combined efforts of the police, Public Prosecution Service, Legal Aid, the Judiciary, Courts and Corrections. The Department continues to work with its justice partners to reduce case processing times.

The Supreme Court of Canada decision *R v. Jordan*, released in July 2016, placed further emphasis on the need to reduce delays and improve efficiencies in the criminal court system by setting thresholds of 18 months from the date the charge is laid to the conclusion of the trial in provincial criminal court and 30 months if the matter is tried in the supreme court. Ninety-nine percent of all criminal court matters in Canada are heard in provincial court. In 2016/17, the Department worked with stakeholders and the judiciary to support innovative approaches to address delays. This includes leveraging technology such as video appearances in appropriate cases, electronic disclosure of evidence from police to Crown, and electronic tracking of each case's progression through the criminal justice system using the thresholds set by the Jordan decision. Innovative approaches to business practices are also being undertaken, such as improved case management. The Public Prosecution Service of Nova Scotia expanded its Early Resolution program in Halifax and Dartmouth Provincial Courts so that every Crown Attorney can take an Initial Sentencing Position (ISP) to begin early resolution discussions in particular cases.

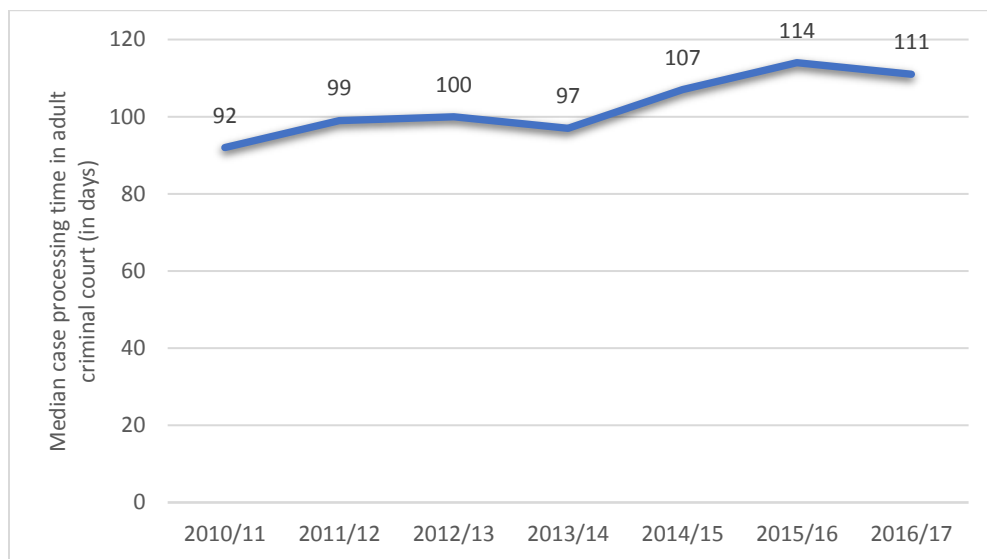
A real-time case age "ticker" has been developed which tracks the length of time since a charge was laid and displays it on key screens of the database. In addition, the status of each charge is read onto the record so that all stakeholders are aware of the length of time since the charge was laid. This information, available in real-time, helps support improved case management in the courtroom, particularly when managing adjournment requests.

To enable timely service, the department employs the use of video technology in the courtroom when possible. Approximately 35% of cases that appeared by video in Nova Scotia courts were for show cause hearings and 33% were for an election and plea hearing. Video court appearances, where appropriate, mean less time spent in transit or in courthouse lockups for accused people in custody and can improve docket efficiency, case processing, as well as security.

Performance Measure¹: Median Case Processing Times in Adult Criminal Court

Case processing time in adult criminal court reflects the median number of days it takes to process cases from first appearance to final disposition. The median represents the midpoint at which half of the cases fall below and half fall above. While average case processing times can be impacted by a small number of unusually long or short cases, the median case processing time is not affected by such cases. For this reason, the median has been adopted as the standard measure of criminal court case processing time by Statistics Canada.

Chart 2: Median Case Processing Time in Adult Criminal Court, 2010/11 to 2016/17



Source: Justice Enterprise Information Network (JEIN), Nova Scotia Department of Justice.

* Excludes cases with Restorative Justice and bench warrants, and cases disposed of at specialty courts

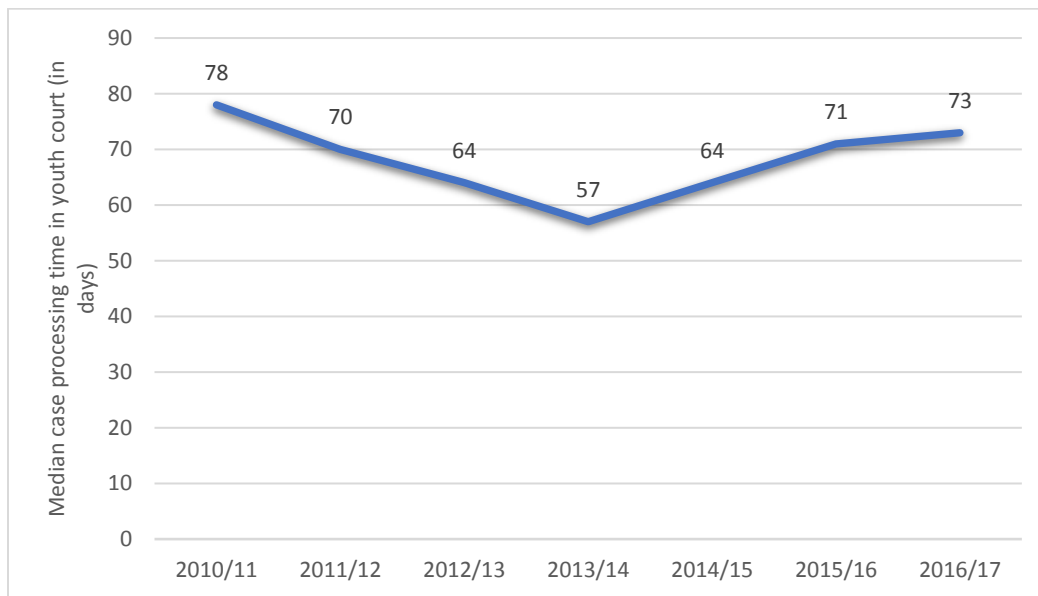
In 2016/17, the median case processing time for adult criminal court cases in Nova Scotia was 111 days (Chart 2). This was a decrease of 3 days (3%) compared to the previous year, but an increase of 19 days (21%) from the 2010/11 base year.

Performance Measure: Median Case Processing Time in Youth Court

This measure indicates the median number of days it takes to process cases in youth court from first appearance to final disposition. It is measured against a target of 98 days established upon recommendation from the Nunn Commission of Inquiry.

In 2016/17, the median case processing time in youth court was 73 days, which is below the 98-day youth case processing target (Chart 3). This was a slight increase of 2 days (3%) compared to the previous year, and is 5 days (6%) less than 2010/11. The median case processing time in youth court has been below the 98-day target each year since 2010/11.

Chart 3: Median Case Processing Time in Youth Court, 2010/11 to 2016/17



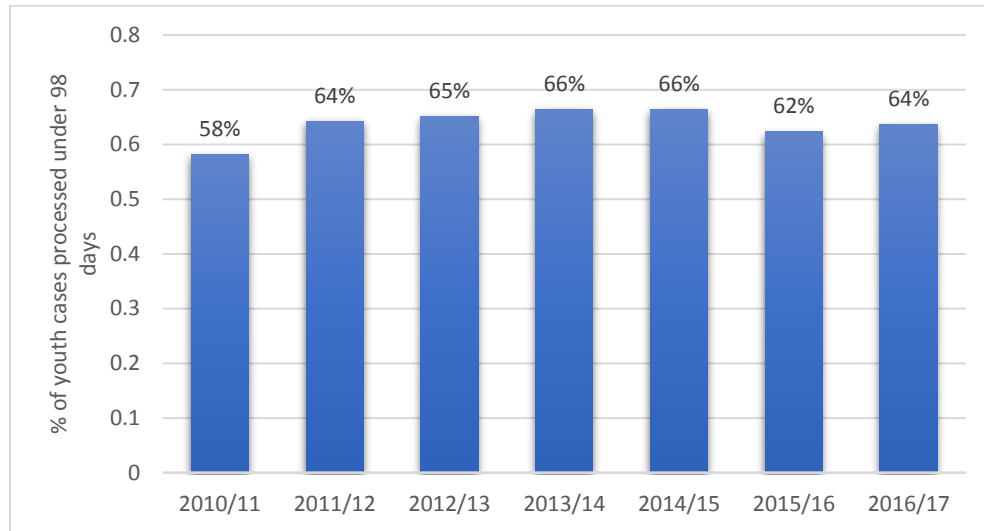
Source: Justice Enterprise Information Network (JEIN), Nova Scotia Department of Justice.
* Excludes cases with Restorative Justice and bench warrants

The median youth case processing time declined between 2010/11 and 2013/14, when it reached its lowest point of 57 days. Since 2013/14, the median youth case processing time has steadily increased.

Analysis has shown that the number of appearances are highly correlated with case processing times. The increase in case processing time since 2013/14 would seem to be, at least in part, due to an increase in the number of appearances required for youth cases to reach a final disposition. In 2013/14, the average number of appearances to final disposition was 4.1 which increased to

4.8 appearances in 2016/17. This indicates that on average, it took about one more appearance for a youth case to reach a final disposition in 2016/17 than it did in 2013/14.

Chart 4: Percentage of Youth Court Cases Completed within the 98-day Target, 2010/11 to 2016/17



Source: Justice Enterprise Information Network (JEIN), Nova Scotia Department of Justice.
* Excludes cases with Restorative Justice and bench warrants

In 2016/17, approximately two-thirds (64%) of cases disposed of in youth court were completed within the 98-day target set out by the Nunn Commission of Inquiry. This proportion has been relatively stable since 2011/12.

Performance Measure: Case processing time in Family Law Proceedings

Progress has been made in the development of case processing times in Family Law proceedings as a measure of timeliness of service. Figures were not finalized as of the time of this Accountability Report.

Performance Measure: Number of MEP Review recommendations implemented

Nova Scotia's Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP) helps facilitate court ordered child and spousal support. The program's goal is to facilitate payment of court-ordered child and spousal support; and to take enforcement action when maintenance payments have not been made. The

provision of these services may result in the removal or minimizing of conflict from an important, and often difficult, family matter.

In fall 2014, the Minister of Justice initiated a review of MEP focused on client service. The final report put forward 27 recommendations across five focus areas – communications and program information; enforcement; court orders; staffing structures and skill sets, and technology. The following measure reflects the number of those recommendations that have been completed.

Year	# of Recommendations Completed	# of Short Term Recommendations Completed	# of Short Term Recommendations Substantially Completed	# of Long Term Recommendations Completed
2016/17	19/27	15/19	4/19	4/8

For the Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP), the Department of Justice focused on completing the 19 short-term goals in 2016/17, and is focusing on the medium to long-term goals in 2017/18. The department completed 15 of the 19 short term goals with the remaining four being substantially complete. The department was also able to complete four of the medium to long-term recommendation. Of the 27 total review recommendations, 19 are now complete. In fall 2016, legislation was passed to amend the *Maintenance Enforcement Act* to increase enforcement tools available to MEP staff. The number of enforcement actions increased by 26% over 2015/16, most notably, examinations, federal license denials, and motor vehicle suspensions.

OUTCOME: The public and the Government receive cost-effective, consistent and effective services

Goal: Promote public safety and wellbeing through efficient and effective service delivery

An Occupational Health and Safety review of Sheriff Services provided 51 recommendations for improvement. Of those, 25 have been completed with an additional 18 substantially completed.

Beginning in 2017 and spanning over three years, renovations will be done for high use cell blocks at Sydney, Dartmouth, and Halifax Provincial Courts. The Department of Justice purchased court house radios and equipment and continues to work on other recommendations including enhancing the threat risk management process, increased training, and other facility and technology upgrades. Twenty-Four Conducted Electrical Weapons were purchased and

issued. 40 Deputy Sheriffs were trained to use them in 2016. Other training included critical incident de-escalation techniques.

Victim Services' achievements include implementation of a new integrated Criminal Injuries Counselling Program Case Management System, the finalization of an Information Sharing Protocol with the Mi'kmaw Legal Support Network Victim Support Service, and the development of an e-referral mechanism with the Public Prosecution Service to streamline the referrals of victims of crime to Victim Services. As well, in 2016-17 a survey of 100 clients was conducted of Nova Scotia Department of Justice Provincial Victim Services Program and Criminal Injuries Counselling Program. The results of the survey indicate a high level of satisfaction by the clients who utilized either the Provincial Victim Services Program (83% satisfied) and/or the Criminal Injuries Counselling Program (89% satisfied). Clients report receiving quality levels of support, system navigation, resource information from the Provincial Victim Services Program and receiving high quality of clinical support from the service providers of the Criminal Injuries Counselling Program.

Goal: Provide cost-effective, consistent and specialized legal advice and representation to government

The Department of Justice continues to provide legal services for the public and Government. Lawyers have focused energy to take matters to court and supported more aggressive enforcement actions, while supporting all client needs as they arose.

To provide better services for Government, new processes were designed. This involved creating project teams, holding focus groups for feedback and analyzing the responses. Implementation of the feedback is pending.

Performance Measure: Percentage of Government Legal Services clients who are satisfied or very satisfied with the way legal services are delivered

The following measure is the result of an annual survey put forward to Government personnel that make use of legal services. Of those that responded to the survey, 97% stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with legal services provided to them in 2016/17. Overall, satisfaction with Legal Services remains high.

Year	% Satisfied or Very Satisfied
2014/15	96%
2016/17	97%

Supplemental Information and Appendices

Appendix A: Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act

The *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* (PIDWA) was proclaimed into law on December 20, 2011.

The Act provides for government employees to be able to come forward if they reasonably believe that a wrongdoing has been committed or is about to be committed and they are acting in good faith.

The Act also protects employees who do disclose from reprisals, by enabling them to lay a complaint of reprisal with the Labour Board.

A wrongdoing, for the purposes of the Act is:

- a. a contravention of provincial or federal laws or regulations
- b. a misuse or gross mismanagement of public funds or assets
- c. an act or omission that creates an imminent risk of a substantial and specific danger to the life, health or safety of persons or the environment, or
- d. directing or counselling someone to commit a wrongdoing

The following is a summary of disclosures received by the Department of Justice.

Information Required under Section 18 of the Act	Fiscal Year 2015-2016
The number of disclosures received	0
The number of findings of wrongdoing	N/A
Details of each wrongdoing	N/A
Recommendations and actions taken on each wrongdoing	N/A

Notes pertaining to performance measures

In 2017, the Department of Justice adopted a new case definition for analyzing criminal court case volumes and processing times. The new definition was adopted based on consultation with justice system stakeholders, who indicated that it better reflects the progression of cases through the system and is therefore a more appropriate method for measuring case processing times. Under the new definition, a case is one or more charges filed against the same person on the same Information or Summary Offence Ticket (SOT).

While the definition of a case has changed, as in previous years, case processing time is measured from the first hearing in the “case” to the hearing at which a final disposition was reached. As with previous methodologies, the current analysis is limited to federal statute offences.

As a result of the change in methodology, data appearing in this report are not comparable to those in previous reports on case processing times, nor are they comparable with Statistics Canada’s reporting.

Both adult and youth court cases involving restorative justice and bench warrants have been excluded in the calculation of case processing times. Cases involving restorative justice are excluded because, on average, these cases take over 200 days to complete which artificially inflates overall case processing times. Those involving bench warrants are excluded because once issued by the Court, the Court cannot control how long it takes to have that warrant executed.

Adult criminal court cases disposed of at specialty courts (i.e., Mental Health Court, Wellness Court, Drug Treatment Program, or the Domestic Violence Court) have also been excluded as these cases tend to take longer to complete due to their nature, and can artificially inflate overall case processing times. No youth cases were disposed of at a specialty court between 2010/11 to 2016/17.